

Timing the Laser's fazer

I'm interested in the Laser 200 which was reported in *PCN* issue 5. You stated that the manuals had to be re-written and the machine wouldn't be released for a month. Since then I've heard nothing about it. Has it not materialised?

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Fear not! The Laser has emerged in the trusty hands of Computers for All on 0286 418414, price £70. Computers for All has also become the main source for that other Hong Kong based machine, the Comx 35, Pro-tested in *PCN* issue 15.

Unfortunately, the same can't be said for the Textet 8000, the Laser's 8K twin. Textet seems to have disappeared for a quick rethink. *PCN* will be Pro-testing the Laser shortly.

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Laser

The Laser, to be sold through the Computers For All chain of retailers, is the current holder of the title Cheapest Colour Computer. But the £70 price tag has only been achieved at the cost of some pretty drastic corner-cutting.

Made by the Hong Kong company Video Technology, it offers a Spectrum-style rubber keyboard, a Z80A processor, 16K ROM and one sound channel. So far so good.

But the graphics resolution is limited to a chunky 128 x 64, and the RAM is downright claustrophobic at 4K.

The Laser boasts one-touch keyword entry, and there are promises of joysticks, a Centronics interface, a four colour printer and a 64K RAM pack. The machine has an uncanny resemblance to the Textet, reviewed in our April issue, and none of the fundamental snags outlined then need to be re-written.

A 16K RAM pack will prove essential for any serious programming, and at £30 this add-on drops the machine into that arena where the Spectrum and Oric are currently slogging it out.

In such company, the Laser's low resolution graphics, lack of established software support, and generally unremarkable specifications are likely to prove fatal.

VZ 200
had 8K RAM.

